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Item 5 of the provisional agenda*

FOR ACTION

GUIDELINES FOR AN EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE EXECUTIVE BOARD AND THE SECRETARIAT OF UNICEF

SUMMARY

Since March 1996, a small "Group of Volunteers" comprised of representatives of Board member countries and observer delegations has had ongoing consultations on the relationship between the Executive Board and the UNICEF secretariat. Other members and observers of the Board as well as the secretariat have been invited to comment on draft guidelines during the process of their elaboration.

The final version of the proposed guidelines were shared with the Board at its 1997 annual session in May, at which time it was also decided that they would be formally submitted to the Board for consideration at the third regular session in September 1997.

* E/ICEF/1997/20.

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New York, May 25, 1997

Madam Mercedes Pulido de Briceno
President of the Executive Board
UNICEF
UNICEF-House
New York

Guidelines for an effective Partnership between the Executive Board and the Secretariat of UNICEF

Madam President,

The work on above mentioned Guidelines - started informally by our "Group of Volunteers" and done over the fourteen months since March 1996 in close consultation with the Secretariat as well as with other members and observers of the Executive Board - has reached the stage where it can be introduced to the Executive Board for formal consideration. We therefore are pleased to submit herewith this proposal to you on behalf of the Executive Board.

In view of the follow-up on this proposal by the Executive Board, we suggest that:
> it be circulated in the existing format among participants to the Annual Session in order to allow everybody to take notice of it;
> the Executive Board - e.g. under "other matters" at the Annual Session - takes it over as a formal proposal into its work programme and decides to deal with it substantially at its third regular session in September 1997 (cf. in the annex the draft decision to this purpose);
> the Executive Board at its third regular session in September 1997 discusses and adopts the Guidelines for implementation:
> the Executive Board and the Secretariat agree to a Memorandum of Understanding setting the Guidelines into force (cf. in annex an outline of such a Memorandum).

We believe that these Guidelines - modest as they may be and in any case only one of many possible measures - are likely to improve further the relationship and collaboration between the Executive Board and the Secretariat. These have obviously been the intentions of our Group from the start of our work!

Sincerely yours,

The members of the "Group of Volunteers":

- John AGGREY, Permanent Mission of Ghana to the UN
- Dino BETI, Permanent Observer Mission of Switzerland to the UN
- Petru Dumitriu, Permanent Mission of Romania to the UN
- Carl Christian HASSELBALCH, Permanent Mission of Denmark to the UN
- Eduardo Paes SABOIA, Permanent Mission of Brazil to the UN

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ANNEX

Towards an effective Partnership between the Executive Board and the Secretariat of UNICEF

Introduction

The Executive Board and the Secretariat of UNICEF are partners in the same institution. In this partnership, each has its specific and characteristic role to play, thus ensuring its respective accountability to the same constituencies of UNICEF, i.e., the recipient and the donor communities. To achieve this in a harmonious and constructive manner it is vital to avoid any confusion, tension and differences over the respective accountability and responsibilities of the Executive Board and of the Secretariat.

According to the Booz•AllenHamilton management study, the Executive Board should always strive to play its true "Policy-Strategy-Oversight (PSO)" role, i.e., above all to govern but not to manage UNICEF's activities. At the same time, the Secretariat, while keeping the Executive Board carefully infomed on important developments within its sphere of activities, should be permitted to carry out its approved mandate and mission without undue interference by the Executive Board.

In this endeavour considerable efforts habe been expended by both partners during the last few years. While remarkable progress has been achieved in the delineation of accountability, roles and responsibilities as well as general relations between the Executive Board and the Secretariat, there remains room for further improvement. The purpose of the following guidelines is, therefore, to consolidate the achievements and to carry on improving this crucial relationship.

Guidelines

The legislative basis for the foregoing is laid forth in GA resolution 48/162 (paras 21 and 22). However, to achieve the optimal working partnership between the Executive Board and the Secretariat, further clarification of their respective competences and responsibilities is necessary.

For the Executive Board to be able to exercise its governance mandate efficiently, it is vital to know precisely which issues fall within its competence and how it should fulfill its true PSO role. Accordingly, only those issues which require Executive Board involvement are taken into consideration for this clarification. It ensues logically that all other responsibilities and activities fall within the competence of the Secretariat.

The issues enumerated below are actually existing tasks of the institution for which the Executive Board and the Secretariat share responsibility. At the same time, they can also be considered as illustrative examples of possible tasks to be taken up by the two partners. The list is by no means all-inclusive since other issues may face the two partners in the exercise of their responsibilities. In such cases the respective role and competence of the Executive Board and of the Secretariat would have to be cleared on a case-by-case basis. By the same token, the Executive Board can, on its own initiative or on the suggestion by the Secretariat, /...

decide to take up « for consultation », resp. « for decision » an issue that is, as a rule, established « for information », resp.« for consultation » only.

These guidelines shall be a tool in the hands of the Secretary of the Executive Board who is the guardian of their implementation and accountable to the Executive Board in ensuring its faithful follow-up.

1. Issues for Executive Board decision:

1.1. Procedure:

For the following issues the final decision lies with the Executive Board. It makes these decisions taking into account the concerns and points of view of the Secretariat.

Normally, the decisions are made by the Executive Board based upon a document prepared by the Secretariat according to the Rules of procedure. Such documents are marked "FOR DECISION". The Secretary of the Board is responsible for ensuring that such documents contain a draft recommendation for Executive Board decision.

In exceptional cases, the decision-making modalities are established especially for the issue at stake by the Bureau in consultation with the Secretariat.

For some of the following issues, a specific procedure is already set up as a rule in order to facilitate the work of the Executive Board and the Secretariat.

1.2. Issues for decision: specific procedure

Policies and Strategies:

- Mission Statement (as well as revisions and changes)
- Follow-up on the Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Sectoral strategies (e.g. health; education; water), cross-sectoral (e.g. emergencies; women and girls) and other strategies
- Regional and sub-regional strategies and programme approaches
- Emerging initiatives (e.g. new world conferences; System-wide initiatives; UNAIDS)
- Principles for collaboration with civil society (e.g. business firms)
- Criteria for awards (e.g. Maurice Pate)

Operations:

- Programmes (country, regional, global, sectoral, etc.)
- General terms of reference for Board member field visits
- Annual report to ECOSOC
- Reports of Joint Committees (WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA; UNESCO/UNICEF)
- Recipient of awards (e.g. Maurice Pate)

Organization:

- Rules of procedure and working methods of the Executive Board
- Inter-sessional meetings >> > decision by Bureau
- Location of headquarters (New York and elsewhere)
- Criteria for election to Joint Committees
- Choice of countries for and programme of field visits >> > decision by Bureau

Structure:

- Location of the Office of the Secretary of the Executive Board within the overall headquarters organigram (e.g. attached to the Office of the Executive Director or to a Deputy Executive Director)
- Establishment of basic field structures such as regional offices
- Framework of collaboration with National Committees

Budget and Funding:

- System for the allocation of general resources
- Approval of the basic budget
- Structure of the administrative and programme support budget
- Establishment of special adjustment facilities (e.g. SAFLAC; Emergency Programme Fund)
- Medium-term financial plan
- GCO budget
- Recovery policy

2. Issues upon which the Executive Board is consulted:

2.1. Procedure:

For the following issues the decision-making responsibility rests with the Secretariat. The Executive Board must be consulted appropriately in order to give the Secretariat valuable guidance in its decision before making it. Timely consultation is therefore of paramount importance.

Normally, the Executive Board is consulted in a formal setting on the basis of a document prepared by the Secretariat according to the Rules of procedure and marked "FOR CONSULTATION". Since the responsibility for any decision-making rests with the Secretariat, the Executive Board gives guidance through oral comments made during the session and reflected in the report thereon without taking any formal decision on the issue.

In exceptional cases, the modalities for consultation are established especially for the issue at stake by the Bureau in consultation with the Secretariat.

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For some of the following issues, a specific procedure is already set up as a rule in order to facilitate the work of the Executive Board and the Secretariat.

2.2. Issues for consultation: specific procedure

Policies and Strategies:

- Follow-up of world conferences
- Follow-up on evaluations (lessons learned)

Operations:

- Medium-term plan
- Annual Report of the Executive Director
- GCO work plan

Structure:

- Major changes in organigram (e.g. merging or splitting of offices like two instead of three departments)
- Establishment of new offices (e.g. Inspection Unit)

Staffing

- Candidate for Executive Director >> >UN Secretary-General in consultation with the President of the Executive Board
- Post profile for Deputy Executive Directors >> >through the Bureau
- Post profile for Secretary of the Executive Board >> >through the Bureau

Budget and Funding:

- Funding Policy
- Resource mobilization policy
- Guidelines for pprivate sector fund raising

3. Issues of which the Executive Board is informed:

3.1. Procedure:

For all of these issues, the responsibility for decision-making rests with the Secretariat. It has, however, to provide the Executive Board with sufficient transparency on its ongoing business by keeping it well informed about its activities, in particular those

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listed below; in this context, it is important to stress that the Executive Board should not involve itself in micro-management.

As a rule the Executive Board receives the information either through written communication intended by the Secretariat for more general use within the institution (e.g. information circulars on appointments) so as to avoid proliferation of documentation, or orally during sessions or inter-sessional meetings. If a document on such an issue is addressed specifically to the Executive Board, it is marked "FOR INFORMATION" and issued accordingly to the Rules of procedure.

Subjects "FOR INFORMATION" do not need to be taken up in a formal setting by the Executive Board. However, the Executive Board or the Secretariat may suggest that this be done in cases when the Executive Board's reaction on a given issue is likely to be of interest to the Secretariat.

Wherever appropriate, special informal consultations can be organized for the purpose by the Secretariat in consultation with the Bureau.

For some of the following issues, a specific procedure is already established in order to improve the interaction between Executive Board and Secretariat or to facilitate the work of both.

3.2. Issues for information: specific procedure

Operations:

- Implementation of policies and strategies (sectoral, cross-sectoral and other plans of operation)
- Other reports than those under 1.2. and 2.2. above

Organization:

- Reallocation of professional posts at headquarters and in the field
- Implementation of managerial and organizational policies (e.g. evaluation; supply and procurement; human resources; etc.)
- Modalities of collaboration with civil society (e.g. business firms)
- Location of regional offices >> >information ex ante for the members of the respective region
- Creation of global, regional and local management teams
- Training programmes for human resources

Structure:

- Establishment of field offices
- Upgrading or downsizing of offices
- Introduction of new systems (e.g. PROMS; information technology)

Staffing:

- Recruitment process for Deputy Executive Directors >> >through the Bureau
- Appointment of Deputy Executive Directors
- Recruitment process for Secretary of the Executive Board >> >through the Bureau

- Appointment of Secretary of the Executive Board >> >special communication to the Executive Board by the Executive Director

- Post profile, recruitment process and appointment of Heads of Divisions >> >through the Bureau
- Post profile and appointment of Regional Directors >> >information ex ante for the members of the respective region

- Appointment of Area and Country Representatives
- Implementation of recruitment strategy (e.g. equitable geographical representation; gender balance)

Budget and Funding:

- Current implementation of budget
- Financial reports (e.g. audits)
- Progress of harmonization and transparency of budgets

Partnership between the Executive Board and the Secretariat of UNICEF

(The enabling document for the guidelines can take the format either of a decision of the Executive Board or of a Memorandum of understanding between the Executive Board and the Secretariat.)

Outline of elements for this enabling document:

1. Recall GA resolutions 57 (I) of 11 December 1946 and 417 (V) of 1 December 1950 establishing the basic principles for the administration and management of UNICEF by the Executive Board and the Secretariat;

2. Reaffirm GA resolutions 48/162 of 20 December 1993, and 50/227 of 24 May 1996 on further measures for the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields, particularly paragraphs 21 to 30 of the annex to resolution 48/162 and paragraphs 76 to 78 of the annex to resolution 50/227 on governing bodies of the United Nations development programmes;

3. Reaffirm, in this context, the commitment of the Executive Board to assume fully its governance role in the fields of policy, strategy and oversight, and reiterate its determination to support the Secretariat in carrying out its approved mandate and mission;

4. Stress the importance of a clear delineation of the respective competences and responsibilities of the Executive Board and of the Secretariat and therefore of a transparent division of work between the two;

5. Set into force the guidelines contained in the annex to the present decision concerning the clarification of the roles, competences and responsibilities of the Executive Board and the Secretariat, and emphazise the need to act upon these in a consistent manner;

6. Decide that the Secretary of the Board is the guardian of the implementation of this decision and is accountable to the Executive Board in ensuring its follow-up.